



EMPLOYMENT

Increase Competitive Integrated Employment for People with IDD

The Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities (TCDD) supports the position that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) have the right to integrated and meaningful employment at competitive wages that includes job training and opportunities for career growth and enhancement.

EMPLOYMENT FIRST

It is the policy of the State of Texas that earning a living wage through competitive integrated employment is the first and preferred outcome for adults with disabilities who receive public benefits. Employment First promotes the expectation that Texans with disabilities are valued members of the workforce and able to meet the same employment standards, responsibilities, and expectations as other working-age adults. The Council supports Employment First policies and will work with the legislature, state agency staff, stakeholders (self-advocates, family members, and employers), and interested parties to promote Employment First policies and positions.

AN UNDERUTILIZED WORKFORCE

Texans with IDD in the competitive labor force contribute to the state's tax base through the purchase of goods and services. When Texans with IDD have the appropriate supports to earn competitive wages alongside their peers without disabilities, they build wealth and assets. Models in other states have shown repeatedly that people previously considered "unemployable" can work and be productive, and can achieve independence.

Employees with disabilities are rated by supervisors as being equally or **more productive** than co-workers and as achieving equal or **better overall job performance**. Hiring managers and executives reported that **employees with disabilities stay in their jobs longer**.

**NEARLY 3 IN 5 TEXANS WORKING IN
SUBMINIMUM WAGE SETTINGS ARE PAID
LESS THAN 50¢ PER HOUR**



COMPETITIVE INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT

Competitive integrated employment means full or part-time work in the community for which the person is paid at least minimum wage. Settings are typical businesses in which individuals with disabilities work side-by-side with people without disabilities, encounter members of the public, and are eligible for the same advancement opportunities as workers without disabilities. However, only 8% of Texans with IDD work in integrated settings with other people without disabilities. Through competitive integrated employment, people with IDD gain an important entry into their communities, develop a sense of being valued, earn wages and job benefits, and get an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution.

LOW INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT RATES

Over 90% of Texans with IDD work in segregated settings and only 8% of Texans with IDD work in integrated settings with other people without disabilities.



■ Texans with IDD working in **integrated** settings
■ Texans with IDD working in **segregated** settings

TCDD INVESTMENT IN TEXAS

TCDD has funded multiple projects throughout Texas designed to help more people with disabilities acquire competitive integrated employment. Below are some examples.



Project H.E.A.R.T.: This project created an app to promote competitive employment opportunities in inventory, requisitions, shipping and receiving (and similar jobs) for adults with IDD.



Project SEARCH®: This project developed internships in healthcare settings for college students with IDD that lead to integrated employment at a competitive wage.



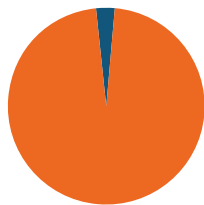
Higher Education Projects: Three TCDD projects help people with IDD participate in post-secondary education to explore careers and pursue meaningful employment.



EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

In 2000, 50% of Texas waiver participants with IDD had employment services included as part of their service plan. However, in 2015, only 2.8% of Texas waiver participants with IDD had employment services included as part of their service plan.

Fiscal Year: 2000

Fiscal Year: 2015



-  People **with employment services** on their service plan
-  People **without employment services** on their service plan

SUBMINIMUM WAGE



Currently, more than 10,000 Texans are paid less than minimum wage solely because of their disability status. Many are paid as little as a penny an hour; most are paid a dollar or less. Texas has 125 of these settings, 12 of which have State Use contracts. According to the Sunset Advisory Commission, these contracts directly contradict Texas' Employment First policy.

Source: Disability Rights Texas

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Eliminate subminimum wage contracts from the state use program.
2. Phase out subminimum wage settings for people with disabilities.
3. Continue the Employment First Task Force and implement Employment First at the program level to ensure competitive integrated employment opportunities for Texans with IDD.
4. Expand higher education opportunities for people with IDD.

MORE INFORMATION

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